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Written submission by the National Human Rights Commission of Korea*

Note by the Secretariat

The Secretariat of the Human Rights Council hereby transmits the communication submitted by the National Human Rights Commission of Korea**, reproduced below in accordance with rule 7(b) of the rules of procedures described in the annex to Council resolution 5/1, according to which participation of national human rights institutions is to be based on arrangements and practices agreed upon by the Commission on Human Rights, including resolution 2005/74 of 20 April 2005.

* National human rights institution with A status accreditation from the Global Alliance of National Institutions for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights.

** Reproduced in the annex as received, in the language of submission only.

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Annex

Consideration of UPR reports of the Republic of Korea

Mr. President.

It is an honor to deliver this statement on behalf of the A Status National Human Rights Commission of Republic of Korea (hereinafter referred to as "NHRCK" or "the Commission").

The NHRCK believes that the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) has made tremendous contributions through its process of regular reporting and review of human rights situations of the Member States. Through its efforts, the UPR has bolstered government's efforts to provide safeguards for human rights and increased awareness among the general public.

In fact, the recent third UPR process of the Republic of Korea, following up on its first and second UPR processes, had been a valuable opportunity to paint the overarching picture of human rights situations, and face pending human rights issues. The Commission believes this process gives us an good opportunity to enhance the domestic human rights situation for the Republic of Korea one step forward as well.

At the end of the third UPR Working Group's review, the Republic of Korea received total of 218 recommendations. The Commission welcomes the Korean government's move to accept 91 recommendations. However, the Commission is also concerned that the remaining 127 recommendations are not accepted as of yet. In order to fully comply with international human rights standards, the Commission urges the Korean government to respectfully accept the recommendations of the UPR Working Group and provide appropriate action plan as soon as possible.

Out of all recommendations made, the Commission recognizes the following recommendations' importance to the domestic human rights agenda. In this regards, the Commission believes that the Korean government should actively pursue and review recommendations made on the ratification of the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty, the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, and the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities; the adoption of comprehensive anti-discrimination law; the repeal of article 92-6 of the Military Criminal Act; the formulation of comprehensive legislation and measure on hate speech; and the decriminalization of conscientious objectors who refused to perform military service and the introduction of alternative service.

As the UPR process examines and enhances general human rights situations of vulnerable and minority groups, the effectiveness of this mechanism is founded on an accurate understanding of human rights issues of the reviewed states by the members of the Human Rights Council. In this regards, the NHRCK will continue to fulfill its role to present its independent opinions in an objective and unbiased manner.

The NHRCK will continue its utmost efforts for the domestic implementation of international human rights standards. To this end, the NHRCK promise to work closely with government bodies, civil society and international human rights organizations.

Thank you.